Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1719 - July 23 2010

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1719 with a release date of Friday, July 23, 2010 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a Q-S-T. Europe gets set to host a major ham radio emergency communications meeting, more on the FCC action to permit hams to take part in emergency training drills sponsored by their employers, the ARRL says amateur radio is growing in the United States, an $8000 do it yourself ham radio satellite is detailed in the MAKE Magazine blog and ham radio honors one of the early pioneers of manned space flight. Find out more on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1719 coming your way right now.

(Billboard Cart Here)

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RESCUE RADIO: EUROPEAN EMCOMM CONFERENCE SEPT 25 TO 26

Europe will be hosting a ham radio emergency communications conference this fall. RSGB newsman Jeremy Boot, G4NJH has the details:

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A European Emergency Radio Conference is being organised in the German town of Gross-Gerau for the weekend of 24th to 26th September.

Known as EuREC-DL, the conference aims to bring together radio amateurs and emergency services to show how the two groups can work together to increase the resilience of their communications.

I'm Jeramy Boot, G4NJH and you are listening to the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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The conference is supported by the German Red Cross. More information can be found at www.EUREC-DL.de. (GB2RS)

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RESCUE RADIO LAW: FCC SAYS PUBLIC GOOD OUTWEIGHS CONCERNS OF HAM COMMUNITY IN THE AREA OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

More this week regarding the Federal Communications Commission report and order changing the amateur radio service rules to allow hams to transmit messages in certain circumstances during disaster drills. This, regardless of whether the ham is an employee of the organizations participating in the drill. Amateur Radio Newsline's Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, is here with some background on the decision and the view taken by the FCC in making it:

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In issuing its Report and Order on Docket RM 10-124, the FCC acknowledged the role that amateurs can play before and during emergencies. It noted

that many governments and safety organizations make hams a part of their emergency planning. As such, the commission agreed that Part 97 rules, as written and codified, had in essence prohibited communications in which an operator has a pecuniary interest. This included communications on behalf of an employer, even when that employer was serving the needs and welfare of the American public.

Until about a year ago, the FCC had unofficially turned its back when hams employed by cities, townships, emergency response groups, hospitals and the like provided services during drills and other training exercises. But that changed when one ham who had provided such a noble service posted about his work on an Internet website. In turn, other hams who oppose ham radio involvement in anything that might even remotely be construed as business related reported the posting to Laura Smith at the FCC. This lead to the FCC contacting the ham about the matter. This was followed by what many construed as a warning from the FCC issued by its rules man Bill Cross, W3TN, at the 2009 Dayton Hamvention:

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Bill Cross, W3TN: "No communications on behalf of an employer means just that. There's no exception for the 15 minutes you are on a break. There's no exception for -gee it's the weekend. Or, there's no exception
because
you want to do it. If its your employer, you cannot transmit communications on their behalf. That is a commercial communications."

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In the real world, this edict meant that hams who work for public safety agencies and hospitals could not participate in tests and exercises even though these same operators would be expected to be ready in time of a real life emergency situation. This satisfied those hams opposed to any business communications and other groups who are anti ham radio being involved in emergency communications. It also brought with it an out-cry from those hams who have devoted their lives to emergency preparedness as well as from a number of emergency communications groups and responders that have traditionally utilized the services of ham radio volunteers.

A few months later, the FCC bowed to public pressure and agreed to issue waivers on a case by case basis to permit ham radio operators to participate in training exercises and drills sponsored by government agencies and those that a government entity might appoint to oversee a practice session. In the meantime, several petitions were filed to change 97.113 to in effect codify into the Amateur Service rules what hams have been doing for almost a century.

Public safety agencies and other first responders generally supported such a rule change. Several ham groups also argued the change would help improve the skills of employees who might have to act during disasters. Others felt it could increase the usefulness of programs such as ARES, RACES and even MARS.

Those who opposed the change felt that it would erode the not for profit amateur status of the service They called the proposal an essential change for the worse in the characteristic of United States Amateur Radio service.

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Others felt a more liberal rules change might encourage hospitals or public safety agencies to replace commercially available commercial mobile radio service equipment with ham gear, or that ham bandwidth might become de facto emergency service spectrum. There was even commentary that such a change could lead to employees being coerced into using their ham privileges, possibly in prohibited ways.

But in rendering its decision, the FCC categorically refuted all comments that had been filed against the rules modification. It stated that such a change would not erode amateur radio because it says the new exception is narrowly crafted. That it is essentially is limited to a given drill or exercise, and that ham radio communications are only one component of test activities. But to negate concerns that non-government entities like private hospitals could use this rule to pressure employees to get ham licenses or engage in questionable practices, the regulators included a time cap to have hams participate in such drills. For non-gpvernmemt entities it is one hour a week and only two drill sessions of up to 72 hours per year. No time limit was placed on ham radio participation in drills sponsored by government entities.

The FCC also dismissed other objections, including the coercion for employees to get licenses argument. In regard to the latter the regulatory agency said that it did not expect that employer over-reaching is likely to be a problem. This, given that the amended rules reflect a spirit of cooperation among the public safety and amateur communities.

In the end the FCC stated that its decision reflects the practical reality that a large number of agencies and organizations at the state and local levels coordinate with their local volunteer amateur radio operators. This, to conduct emergency drills and exercises in concert with other modes of communication, such as land mobile radio. It called such activities as essential to allow for a practiced response on the part of the first responder community.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline I'm Bruce Tennant, K6PZW, in Los Angeles

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What the FCC appears to be saying is that the needs of the general public in time of disaster outweigh any concerns that members of the ham radio community might have expressed. Its also saying that the only way the ham community can be prepared for real disaster situations is through education and practice, and that's what permitting radio amateurs on the clock to take part in training exercises is really what this is all about.

You can read the report and order, which includes the new rule language from a link at our website at www dot arnewsline dot org. (ARNewsline(tm) from FCC release. Audio from ARNewsline(tm) archive)

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MAKE MAGAZINE BLOG PRESENTS $8,000 DIY HAM SATELLITE KIT

If you have ever wanted your own personal ham radio satellite but thought

it was financially out of reach, the Make Magazine blog carries a short item on a satellite that can be yours for just $8,000.

Called a TubeSat, the magazine says that the kit for a tiny bird from Interorbital Systems that is designed to function as a basic satellite bus or as a simple stand-alone satellite. Included are the satellite's structural components, printed circuit board. electronic components, solar cells, and everything needed to build the satellite. Also included are the required programming tools.

Make's blog says that with these components alone, the builder can construct a satellite that puts out enough power to be picked up on the ground by a hand-held amateur radio receiver. It says that simple applications include broadcasting a repeating message from orbit or programming the satellite to function as a private orbital amateur radio relay station.

Interorbital Systems says it can deploy 32 of these tiny satellites simultaneously on a Neptune 30 launcher from the Pacific island of Tonga. The first launch is slated for the end of the year. These satellite will go into a very low Earth orbit and would probably have a lifetime of only a few months.

If you have an extra $8000 and want to be the first with his or her own personal ham radio satellite you can read more about the concept on line in the MAKE magazine blog at tinyurl.com/personalbird.

We will have more ham radio space related news later on in this weeks Amateur Radio Newsline report.

(Southgate, MAKE Blog)

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BREAK 1

 From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the W6MPH repeater serving Pasadena, California.

(5 sec pause here)

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HAM NUMBERS: FIRST HALF OF 2010 SEES UPSWING IN NEW AMATEUR RADIO LICENSEES

The ARRL says that with 18,270 new Amateur Radio licenses issued in the first half of this year 2010 is shaping up to be a banner year for growth in amateur radio.

The League reports that so far, the number of new licenses issued by the FCC in 2010 is outpacing the January to June 2009 totals by almost 8.5 percent. That breaks down to 16,844 new licenses in the same time period last year verses the 18,270 new hams so fat in 2010.

As of June 30, this year, there are 694,346 licensed amateur radio operators in the United States. Broken down by license class at the end of June 2010, there were 16,299 Novices, 342,064 Technicians, 154,284 Generals, 60,059 Advanced and 121,640 Amateur Extra licensees. Not to shabby for a hobby that was listed on the July 17, 2008 Walletpop blog as one of the 25 things predicted that would soon disappear in America. (ARRL)

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RADIO RECOGNITION: OMB NAMES FCC MOST IMPROVED FEDERAL AGENCY

The White House's Office of Management and Budget says that the Federal Communications Commission is the most improved federal agency in the area of employee satisfaction. This. based on the results of a study titled the 2010 OPM Viewpoint Employee Satisfaction Survey made public on Monday, July 12th.

According to the Washington insider newsletter The Hill, FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski credits new opportunities for employees to provide feedback, the improvement of internal communication, and efforts toward leadership development for achieving this position. He also credited Democratic Commissioner Michael Copps for his work as acting chairman before his tenure began. (The Hill, other published reports)

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FAILING TECHNOLOGY - THE PEACOCK UNEXPECTEDLY ON THE EYEBALL

You might call this next story a case of failing technology. It happened on Friday, July 9th when audio from NBC Nightly News was heard on the competing CBS Evening News, and it all happened live.

According to the website TVNewser.com, when CBS anchor Katie Couric tossed to correspondent Mark Strassman who was doing a live report from Louisiana on the latest on the oil spill. But instead of hearing Strassman, CBS viewers heard the audio from NBC Nightly News reporter Martin Fletcher. Fletcher was across the big Atlantic pond live from London on the spy swap story.

When CBS News realized what was going on, it quickly ran Strassman's pre-produced version of the story in its place. There was no mention of the audio snafu when Strassman tossed back to Couric.

What caused the problem is anyone's guess. One engineer who has spent 30 years in the technical side of TV news thinks that it was likely a problem outside the direct control of the two networks. Rather he believes it was most likely at the switching hub of one of the companies that the various news organizations with contract long haul satellite and fiber optic feeds. But adds our expert, that's only a guess on his part.

If you want to see and hear this broadcast snafu for yourself, as we write this report its on-line at tinyurl.com/2bm89dy   (TVNewser.com)

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ELECTRONIC LAW: CEASE AND DECIST ORDER ON LIGHT SABER SOLD ON EBAY

Now here's a strange story involving electronics law. It seems that LucasFilm Ltd. recently served a manufacturer of a handheld laser with a cease-and-desist letter. This, for selling an item it claimed was too close in resemblance to its trademark light sabers from "Star Wars."

But the Hong Kong firm decided to use the force of eBay to score some revenge. This by putting the cease-and-desist letter up for auction.

According the Hollywood Reporter entertainment industry newspaper, the letter was not signed by George Lucas himself. Rather the company marketed the legal document as an opportunity for those to win a piece of LucasFilm history as well as contribute to the company's battle with the giant film maker. (HR)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: AMSAT-UK SPACE COLLOQUIUM TO BE WEBCAST

If you cant make it to the 2010 AMSAT U-K Space Colloquium, then you will still be able to take part vicariously by watching it on your PC or Mac. This with the announcement that the British Amateur Television Club will again be provided over the Colloquium weekend.

The event takes place July 31st to August 1st at the Holiday Inn in Guildford, England. Live web streaming begins on Saturday the 31st at 09:00 UTC. To tune in, just go to www (dot) batc (dot) tv and click on the words Live Events. (AMSAT-UK)

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RADIO ON THE NET: NEW EASY TO NAVIGATE POPCOMM WEBSITE LAUNCHED

Popular Communications magazine has launched what it calls a new and easier-to-navigate website. The updated site features a clean new look and a streamlined user interface to make it quicker and easier for visitors to find what they are looking for.

Current issue highlights include sample pages in full-color layout, to give prospective readers the ability to see what the magazine itself looks like in print. Live links to Internet sites mentioned in upcoming issues' editorial content will help users further explore topics of interest to them.

Highlights of back issues remain on the website with easier access than in the past. The site also includes contact information for editors and columnists, direct links to advertisers' websites, other CQ Communications publications and an extensive collection of hobby radio links and radio club information. In addition, a direct link to the magazine's Facebook page makes it simple for readers to provide feedback and connect with other hobbyists.

The new Popular Communications website is in cyberspace at www.popular-communications.com. (PopComm)

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THE SOCIAL SCENE: TOKYO HAM FAIR 2010 AUGUST 21 - 22

The ham radio social season continues with word that the giant Tokyo Ham Fair for 2010 is slated for August 21st and 22nd at the Tokyo Big Sight arena.

Ham Fair is sponsored by the Japan Amateur Radio League and is one of the largest gatherings of radio amateurs from across the Pacific Rim. Its also where many Pacific Rim ham radio manufacturers give a first glance at the products that they plan to introduce world-wide in the coming year.

You can see more about the Tokyo Ham Fair in English at tinyurl.com/334jzb8. If you are interested in visiting the Tokyo Ham Fair you can e-mail the planners to intl (at) jarl (dot) or (dot) jp for information and assistance. (JARL)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: WRTC 2010 WINNERS ANNOUNCECD

Some names in the news. We begin with word that the winners of the 2010 World Radiosport Team Championship have been announced. Taking the Gold medal was the Russian R32F Team of Vladimir Aksenov RW1AC, and Alexey Mikhailov, RA1AIP. The Silver medal was garnered by the Estonia R33A Team of Tonno Vahk, ES5TV, and Toivo Hallikivi, ES2RR. Third place or Bronze went to the R33M Team of Dan Craig, N6MJ, and Chris Hurlbut, KL9A, of the United States.

The World Radiosport Team championship takes place every few years in a different country. Teams use the same power and identical antennas. The stations are also geographically close to each other in an attempt to level the playing field as much as possible, so that the winners can truly be said to be the best contesters in the world.

The 2010 World Radiosport Team Championship was held near Moscow Russia. This year 48 pairs of participants from around the world took part. (WRTC)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: WA4HYJ TO RECEIVE 2010 MC GAN SILVER ANTENNA AWARD

The ARRL has announced that Norm Lauterette, WA4HYJ, is to be the recipient of the 2010 Philip J. McGan Silver Antenna Award. According to the announcement, Lauterette of Casselberry, Florida has been an ARRL Public Information Officer for two decades. In that time he has demonstrated outstanding volunteer public relations success on behalf of amateur radio at both the local and regional levels. His numerous published articles both within and outside of the amateur radio community have enhanced overall support of the hobby. At the same time his effective use of local political and police relationships he has fostered an environment that significantly increased regional public awareness of amateur radio. (ARRL)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

(5 sec pause here)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: TWISTING CRYSTALS

Chemists in the United States and Russia have created crystals that can twist and untwist. This they say points to a much more varied process of crystal growth than previously thought and could pave the way for new electronic products. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, is in the newsroom with the details:

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Crystal growth has traditionally been viewed as a collection of individual atoms, molecules, or small clusters adding to a larger block that remains in a fixed translational relationship to the rest. But the New York University and St. Petersburg State University chemists have discovered a wholly new phenomenon for growth in a crystal structure that continually changes its shape as it grows.

To do this, the researchers focused on crystals from hippuric acid which is a derivative of the amino acid glycine. As molecules were added to the end of fine crystalline needles, stresses built up at the tips of the crystals and resulted in a helical twist. The process was reversed when crystals thickened from the opposite end of the growing tip thereby undoing the twisted formations.

The researchers work, which appears in the latest issue of the Journal of the American Chemical Society, may explain some of the properties of high-polymers These are used in clothing and liquid crystal displays, among other consumer and telecommunications products.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in Los Angeles.

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You can read more on this fascinating scientific breakthrough on-line at tinyurl.com/crystaltwist. (Science Daily)

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EMERGING TECHNOLOGY: THE END OF R-O-S

It may well be the end of the road of the road for amateur radio version of the digital mode R-O-S. It is, if you accept an Internet posting by its creator Jos Alberto Nieto Ros.

Writing on his website, the software's author says that R-O-S version 1.0

released on July 11th will be the last. He says that he came to this decision after reading what he terms as too many derogatory comments directed towards him in Digital Group and on the R-O-S Digital Modem Group. Based on this, Jos Ros says that its simply not worth it to him to work further to evolve this software.

It should be noted that R-O-S is still not a legal transmit mode in the United States. (ZL2TZE)

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WORLDBEAT: SARL STREAMLINES SA HAM RADIO TESTING PROCESS

The Council of the South African Radio League has put in place some strict rules regarding ham radio testing in that nation. This in the hope of streamlining the South African Radio Amateur Examination process so as to deliver the results and call signs to successful candidates faster.

Effective immediately, candidates can only apply for one examination. In other words applicants can take only the for the class A or Class B at a single session and it will no longer be possible to sit for both examinations at the same time. Also, the closing date to apply will be strictly adhered to a d no late entries will be accepted. A candidate who's Registration is incomplete by the closing date will not be able to take the examination and will not receive an examination number.

According to a spokesperson for the South African Radio League, while it may sound harsh, the reality is that it is the few candidates who do not comply with the guidelines who delay the call sign and licensing process of all the others. Insuring that all documentation is received by the entry deadline will also assist the nations telecommunications regulator in speeding up the licensing process. (SARL, Southgate)

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WORLDBEAT: SPAIN EXTENDS 70 MHz ALLOCATION THROUH JULY 1 2011

Spanish Radio Amateurs have received an extension allowing them to use the 70 MHz band until July 1, 2011. The Spanish Department of Post and Telecommunications first announced the temporary authorization of 70.150 to 70.200 MHz back in October of 2008. (EA3BRA)

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: NEW DISTANCE RECORD ON THE AGEING AO-7 HAMSAT

A new ham radio in space record on one of the hobbies oldest birds. At 2226 UTC onn July 15th, PY5LF in Curitiba, Brazil worked Josef Spandler, K3SZH, via AMSAT OSCAR 7 and achieved a new DX record for that bird of 7843 km which equates to 4898 miles.

What makes this contact all the more amazing is that AMSAT OSCAR 7 was launched some 36 years ago on November 15th, 1974 from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Lompoc, California. A Oh 7 still continues to provide limited service even though its batteries failed years ago and it is only operational when its solar panels are in sunlight. (Southgate, ARNewsline

(tm))

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: AMSAT CALLS FOR PAPERS FOR 2010 SPACE SYMPOSIUM

The September 1st deadline of the call for papers for the 2010 AMSAT Space Symposium and Annual Meeting is rapidly approaching. AMSAT requests that those submitting papers send them the tentative title and abstract of your presentation as soon as possible. The abstract does not require any special format. Simply send an e-mail to the Proceedings Editor to k9jkm (at) comcast (dot) net with the basic information. This would include the author name, callsign, and a few sentences that describe your proposed topic. (ANS)

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ON THE AIR: PUERTO RICO CONSTITUTION DAY SPECIAL EVENT

On the air, members of the Movimiento de Radioaficionados de Puerto Rico will sponsor a special event station on July 25th. This, to commemorate 58th anniversary of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. They will use the call WP4NPC on SSB and digital modes and operate from 10 to 40 meters in a DXpedition style operation from 1400 to 2300 UTC. QSL via WP4NPC, PO Box 3484, Bayamou, Puerto Rico, 00958. (Via e-mail)

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ON THE AIR: CELEBRATING LASSEN VOLCANIC NATIONBAL PARK

And from August 7th to the 14th listen out for special event station N6L, to be active from California's Lassen Volcanic National Park. This will be a Multi operator portable and mobile operation with activity on the High Frequency, WARC and VHF bands. A QSL and certificate is available. QSL via K6LSN. (Via e-mail)

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DX

In DX, PA4N operating portable MU is operating from Guernsey Island mostly on CW but also some RTTY and SSB on 160 through 6 meters. QSL via the bureau to his home call.

And listen out for PG4DX operating portable P4 from Aruba through August 6th. Most operations are near the IOTA frequencies. QSL via bureau or direct to his home call.

I1FQH is operational as 5V7DX from Kpalime Village in central Togo through July 30th. He uses a Spiderbeam on 20 through 10 meters and a homebrew vertical on 40 and 30 meters. QSL via bureau or direct or Logbook of the World or to his home call.

Lastly, F5NVF, will be active portable 6W from Zsenegal between October 25th and November 1st. His operation will be on CW on the High Frequency bands. No other are yet known other than to QSL to his home call sign.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: CELEBRATING SPACE PIONEER ASTRONAUT GUS GRISSOM SPECIAL EVENT STATION

And finally this week, a special ham radio link will allow visitors to the Gus Grissom Memorial in Mitchell, Indiana's Spring Mill State Park to talk with the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas on Gus Grissom Day. Jack Parker, W8ISH, is in Indianapolis and has the details:

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The Gus Grissom Memorial at Spring Mill State Park honors the astronaut who was America's second man in space. Virgil I. "Gus" Grissom made that
 sub
orbital flight in the Mercury 7 Liberty Bell capsule. Grissom grew up in Mitchell, Indiana near the state park. He learned to fly as a boy and flew fighter jets in Korea.

The memorial tells about Grissom's life and contributions to the space program. Grissom and two other astronauts died in January 1967 when their Apollo One command module caught fire on the launch pad at the Kennedy Space Center. Museum artifacts include Grissom's space suit, one of the space capsules he flew in and personal items from his youth and adulthood.

During the day long event visitors can talk to the Johnson Space Center in Houston through a special ham radio link set up by the Hoosier Hills Amateur Radio Club. They will be operating on 40 and 20 meters. The southern Indiana hams have planned a mini fox hunt for the kids and will provide a worksheet for kids tospell out their name in Morse Code. They will use a straight key and oscillator to finish the code sending exercise.

The Amateur Radio special event station will be on the air from late morning until the park closes at 11PM.

Reporting for Amateur Radio Newsline, this is Jack Parker W8ISH

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Amateur radio honoring one of the pioneers of the United States space program who lead the way to help conquer the final frontier. (W8ISH, Hoosier Hills Amateur ARC)

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the Amateur Radio Newsline(tm). Our e-mail address is newsline@arnewsline.org. More information is available at Amateur Radio Newsline's(tm) only official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can

also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), 28197 Robin Avenue, Santa Clarita California, 91350

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editors desk, I'm Jim Damron, N8TMW, in Charleston, West Virginia, saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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